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APERS ON MALAY SUBJECTS.

[*Published by direction of the Government of the Federated Malay States.*]

R. J. WILKINSON, *F.M.S. Civil Service,*
General Editor.

SUPPLEMENT:
THE ABORIGINAL TRIBES.

BY
R. J. WILKINSON, *F.M.S. Civil Service.*

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PREFACE.

THIS little essay on the Wild Tribes of the Malay Peninsula represents the work of many persons besides myself. I wish to express my special indebtedness to the following gentlemen:

(1) for information about the Semang Paya and their language: to the Orang Kaya Mantri, Malay Magistrate, Selama; to the Assistant Penghulu of Ijok; and to Messrs. Robinson and Kloss, of the Museums Department;

(2) for information about the Sakai Jeram and their language: to Mr. Hubert Berkeley, District Officer, Upper Perak; to Mr. H. C. Robinson, Director of Museums; and to the Vernacular School Teachers at Grit and Lenggong;

(3) for information about the Sakai Jeher and their language: to Mr. Berkeley and to Messrs. Robinson and Kloss;

(4) for information about the Northern Sakai: to Mr. Berkeley; to Mr. E. M. Schwabe, formerly of Tanjong Rambutan; to Mr. Gordon Brown, of Sungei Krudda Estate; to Mr. Boden Kloss; and, above all, to the diaries left by the late Mr. Williams;

(5) for information about the Central Sakai and their language: to Mr. H. C. Robinson; to Mr. W. H. Lee-Warner, of the Civil Service; to the Penghulus of Sungkai and Temoh; to the Assistant Penghulu of Chenderiang; and to the Vernacular School Teachers at Tapah, Slim, Kinjang, and Gunong Panjang;

(6) for information about the Besisi and their language: to Mr. H. C. Robinson; to Mr. F. A. Callaway, formerly of Pulau Lumut; to Mr. H. B. Ellerton, formerly District Officer, Negri Sembilan Coast; and to Mr. Caldecott, District Officer, Jelebu;

(7) for information about the Jakun and their language: to Mr. E. A. Dickson, formerly District Officer, Kuala Pilah; to Mr. J. P. Swettenham, formerly Executive Engineer, Kuantan, Pahang; to Mr. Wallace, of the Survey Department; to Mr. Minehan, of the Survey Department; and to Mr. A. J. Sturrock, formerly District Officer, Temerloh.

I have also to thank Mr. Caldecott, of Jelebu, for very careful enquiries regarding the Kenaboi Sakai in his district.

It was at one time my intention to write a supplementary pamphlet on the Sakai languages. This intention has been abandoned because such a work would be out of place in this series of non-linguistic papers; because it would involve the use of special type; and because it would take up a great deal of time and space if all the fifty or sixty vocabularies are to be reproduced in extenso. Some special use of this material may be made later, but for the present I am content to publish the general conclusions, together with a brief comparative vocabulary (to illustrate the common element in the languages), and a grammatical note on the dialect best known to me.

R. J. W

INTRODUCTORY.

If the extent of our knowledge of the wild tribes of Malaya was to be measured by the mere weight of the books that have been written about them the subject would not afford much scope for further research. The work of Messrs. Skeat and Blagden covers some 1,600 pages; Dr. Rudolf Martin's book is almost as voluminous; then we have a fifteen-shilling "fasciculus" by Messrs. Annandale and Robinson, a French work on "Perak et les Orang Sakey," a book by Signor Cerruti on "My Friends the Savages," many essays by Father Schmidt and others on the Mon-Annam affinities of the Sakai dialects, and innumerable articles by Vaughan-Stevens, Clifford, Hale, Knocker, de Morgan and other authorities, reliable or the reverse. But with all this mass of literature we know next to nothing about the aborigines of the Malay Peninsula. No European has ever mastered a Sakai dialect or made himself familiar with the inner life of any single Sakai tribe. The flying visits of scientific observers represent very little more than the intelligent globe-trotter and his note-book of first impressions. They may tell us some simple facts about the shape of a Sakai's house, the colour of his skin and hair, and perhaps a few details about his clothing, habits and weapons. To such notes there may be added a short vocabulary of some 200 or 300 words. There our information ends; and, after all, it rests only on some brief conversations (usually through an interpreter) and a few photographs and measurements taken in a hurry. Is it surprising that our experts disagree when every

writer has to begin by discussing the reliability of other people's work? Paucity of evidence leads, of course, to plenitude of criticism and explains why books are big when facts are few.

The line of discussion usually followed in such cases also tends to kill popular interest in the wild tribesmen of the Peninsula. They are represented as inaccessible persons who are remarkable principally for their cephalic index and their Mon-Annam affinities—and baits of this sort fail to attract the general reader. No sane *savant* is likely to give up the best years of his comfortable life to the study of wandering tribes who lead lives of hardship in the recesses of unhealthy forests; nor is it probable that any practical planter or trader will take an enthusiastic interest in the cranial proportions of the savages that he meets. It is to be feared that there will always be a distinction between the people who know the wild tribes and the people who write about them.

In the early days of European trade with the Far East the Peninsular aborigines were known through the *Orang Bĕnua* or Jakun of Malacca, and were regarded as mere simian savages, the *Binuas Satyros* of the old Portuguese maps. The first traders took no interest in them. At a later date when research became more popular and when the British occupation of Penang brought our students into relation with the Semang, the presence of negrito tribesmen in a Malayan country roused much curiosity and led ultimately to the belief that the other wild races were only the result of blends between the Semang and the Malay. This was the "Pan-Negrito" theory that influenced the writings of Miklukho-Maclay. Of course, no one believes in it now. Even from the beginnings of Sakai investigation the

theory was questioned by those who had knowledge of the existence of fair aboriginal tribes showing no trace of either Negrito or Malay admixture. A mystery seemed to hang over the wild tribes of the Peninsula and to suggest that somewhere in the Malayan forests there might be found the most primitive tribes on earth, men who would represent the missing link of Darwinism. In the end a man was sent out to solve this mystery—a collector named Vaughan-Stevens whose work in the early nineties did much to advertise Sakai research in Europe and to rouse expectations that were never destined to be fulfilled.

I knew the "Professor," as Vaughan-Stevens was styled. He was a simple kindly man who possessed a great gift of imaginative exaggeration. He told me that he had made the acquaintance of the wilder Sakai by festooning a forest tree with beads and pieces of cloth and by listening to the comments of the ambushed savages until he had heard enough to enable him to speak their language. Indeed he was full of strange tales and stranger resources. By covering himself with tar he claimed to make himself leechproof and independent of clothes. If he was unlucky enough to break his leg, he simply thrust the injured limb into a swamp: the sun caked the mud into a natural splint and gave the patient no trouble except that of digging himself out when the cure was complete. Any one who totalled up—as I did—the periods of time that Vaughan-Stevens asserted spending in the different savage countries that he had visited was impelled to the conclusion that the "Professor" was either a Methuselah or an Ananias. He was neither. He was a humourist who did not expect to be taken seriously. But afterwards, when his

professional work came to be impugned, these jesting stories of his idle hours were also quoted against his memory with a Teutonic solemnity that made them still more ridiculous. Jokes though they were, they have been fatal to his name. He has become a discredited writer whose work serves as a red rag for the horns of the ethnological expert.

Vaughan-Stevens was no "Professor"; he was not even a *savant*; he was an expert collector sent out to collect skulls and anthropological exhibits for a syndicate of scientists in Germany. Within his limits he did his work well. His skulls were genuine; and there is no suspicion attaching to his blow-pipes, quivers and bamboo-combs. But his employers expected more. Ignorant as he was of Sakai and even of Malay, he could not hope to get any real insight into the ideas and beliefs of tribes whose plane of thought is so far removed from our own. When asked to give information of this sort he could only do his best; and his best was a *bonâ fide* conjecture by a very imaginative person. Moreover, it is doubtful whether his employers had any conception of the cost and danger of journeys through the wilds of the Peninsula. Vaughan-Stevens was miserably poor; he could not afford to engage coolies and elephants or equip expeditions through the jungle. By working at outposts like Ulu Selama and Kuala Medang he met the tamer aborigines and obtained through them some information about the wilder tribes. He succeeded in making good collections of museum-exhibits, though he was handicapped in his accounts of them by his ignorance of Sakai and Malay. In the end things went against him. He made no startling discoveries, for there were none to be made. He found

that the Sakai were too human to be interesting and that the wild tribes differed very little from the tame. The close connection between the human Semang and the simian siamang—regarding which one French anthropologist wrote for information to Sir Hugh Low—proved to have no existence except in sound. Disappointed, impoverished, aged, ill and discredited, Vaughan-Stevens drifted to Borneo, where he died miserably from an overdose of morphia, self-administered. Surely, his story is a sad one; and the futility of his life-work is not its least tragic feature.

Vaughan-Stevens' best work lies in his collections. His records of customs and beliefs may be regarded as valueless, though they were based on first-hand information and though there is no evidence of imposture or even of extreme carelessness. First-hand information is of very little use without a satisfactory medium of interpretation; that, at least, might be learnt from the failure of Vaughan-Stevens. Not that the lesson will ever be learnt. The policy of studying the aborigines by means of flying visits and anthropological picnics will always be more attractive than the dreary labour of mastering their language before attempting to understand their thoughts. An excursion of a few days to "unexplored Malaya" turns a traveller into an "authority"—in the absence of anyone to say him nay—and entitles him to add his quotum to the misinterpretations and misunderstandings that obscure all Sakai research.

Of far higher value to these studies is the work that has been done by students who were resident in the Peninsula itself—notably, Sir Hugh Clifford in Pahang, Mr. Skeat on the Selangor coast and Mr. Cerruti in

the Batang Padang mountains. Sir Hugh Clifford possessed much local knowledge and was a master of the Malay language, the one practical medium of communication. Besides collecting very accurate and very useful vocabularies of "Senoi" (Central Sakai) and "Tembe" (Northern Sakai) he rendered a great service to methodical research by insisting on the importance of tribal divisions as against the slipshod process of treating all the aborigines as one or even two peoples. Mr. Skeat's prolonged study of the Coast Besisi added very materially to our knowledge of the aborigines. The Besisi have lost, it is true, many of their distinctive beliefs and customs through long contact with the Malays, but they still retain their ancient language; Mr. Skeat's vocabulary and his "Besisi Songs" supply the fullest linguistic data that have yet been published about any aboriginal tribe. Mr. Cerruti's recent book on the Mai Darat of Batang Padang is another contribution of importance. Although he was not a linguist like Sir Hugh Clifford and Mr. Skeat, he wrote of a tribe with which he had many years intimate acquaintance, confined himself to that tribe, wrote only of what he had himself observed, and had no theories of his own to advance. His account of the life of the Mai Darat is very full and true.

The rest that has been written about the aboriginal tribes is either the notes of excursionists who have paid flying visits to the Sakai or else it is the work of scholars in Europe who have built up theories and inferences upon the notes of others. The former type—of which Dr. Rudolf Martin's book is the most brilliant example—may be dismissed as insufficient and inconclusive even when it is accurate within its own narrow limits. Of the latter

type the writings of Father Schmidt and of Mr. Blagden are the best instances. While it is premature, perhaps, to discuss the Mon-Annam affinities of languages so little known as the aboriginal tongues of the Malay Peninsula, there is no doubt that Mr. Blagden's analysis of these languages—in their relation to one another—is of very practical value. He shows us where one dialect ends and another begins—and inferentially he enables us to learn how many wild tribes there are in the country and how far the limits of each tribe extend. He gives us, in fact, a dialectic and tribal map of the aboriginal races of Malaya.

There are, however, certain limitations that must be associated with the analytical work of Father Schmidt and Mr. Blagden. They worked in Europe, using such materials as were already in existence. If they lacked information on any point, they could not supplement their store of knowledge by making enquiries on the spot; they had to be content with what they had got. Moreover, they worked on linguistic data only. A student working in the Peninsula itself is at a great advantage. If his information on any point is insufficient he can supplement it; if it is doubtful he can check it. This advantage is my justification for the authorship of this little pamphlet on the aboriginal tribes. Its conclusions are based on the collection of nearly sixty type-vocabularies (of over 200 words each) filled up by workers in all parts of the Peninsula. Nothing has been left unrepresented or uncorroborated—each dialect being represented by two or more vocabularies taken down by different observers and independently of one another. In each case also the linguistic data have been supplemented by the collection of information regarding the culture and customs of the tribe.

The results of the enquiry have been the reverse of sensational. They do not bear out Mr. Blagden's theory that there are (at least) three distinct linguistic groups in the Peninsula each with its own dialects and sub-dialects. The vocabularies tend to show that there are five dialects spoken and that these dialects have so many words in common that they may be regarded as belonging to one single language-group. Corresponding to these five main differences in speech there are important differences in race and culture, so that it may be taken for granted that there are five distinct tribes or races of aborigines; the Semang, the Northern Sakai, the Central Sakai, the Besisi, and the Jakun. We can now proceed to discuss each in its turn.

THE ABORIGINAL TRIBES.

PART I.—DIVISIONS OF RACE AND CULTURE.

THE SEMANG.

THE word *Sĕmang* is a term applied by the Malays of Kedah to the negrito aborigines who live in their country. Like most names given by a dominant to a subject people it has come to be regarded as contemptuous, so that no wild tribesman will answer to it. "We are not Semang," say the negritoes of Ijok, "we are Sakai of the Swamps; if you want Semang you will find them on the hills behind us." "Not so," say the negritoes of the hills, "we also are not Semang, but if you cross the valley of the Perak to the main range of the Peninsula you will find Semang on the heights behind the rivers Piah and Plus." Should the traveller carry out these directions he will find in the Plus mountains a fairer race of aborigines who likewise repudiate the designation of Semang. A name that is rejected or misapplied in this way is a fruitful source of error and confusion, especially among anthropologists of the excursionist type who accept uncritically everything that they hear. Paradoxical as it may sound, the man who calls himself a Sakai is never a Sakai. That name also is contemptuous; and no true Sakai will own up to it—he prefers to call himself a "mountaineer" or "man of the forest." But the negrito, who belongs to a lower plane of culture, is flattered when he is taken for a Sakai, and accepts the word at once. Whence more confusion; but for the purposes of this paper the word Semang may be taken as the tribal equivalent of "negrito."

To puzzle the ethnologist still more the negrito is nomadic and trades with the fairer or "Sakai" tribes. Many a Sakai blow-pipe, bow or quiver must have found its way to Ijok or Selama or Siong, there to be sold to some confiding collector as an example of negrito culture. Under such circumstances controversy becomes endless; there is always a host of eye-witnesses to impugn any statement about the "Semang." For the purposes of this paper the expression "Semang" when applied to a blow-pipe, for instance, refers to a type of blow-pipe that is found exclusively among negritoes; it does not preclude the possibility of other types being also bought, borrowed, or imitated. On the other hand, the Sakai with his higher culture is not likely to copy the wretched appliances of a humbler race.

The characteristics of the Semang in his most primitive state may be summarised as follows. He is a short lightly-built person of very negroid type, nomadic in his life, lax in his morality, and filthy in his habits. He plants little or nothing, preferring to live on wild fruit, roots and the produce of the chase. He does not build permanent houses, but is satisfied with a mere screen-shelter, or at best a "bee-hive" hut made of palm-branches. In sexual matters he has no race-jealousy. Of his religion very little is known. He seems to be free from that all-pervading terror of ghosts and of the dead that is so marked a feature of Sakai beliefs. On the other hand, he fears lightning and thunder to such an extent that observers have credited him with the possession of a thunder-god. He seems to have some sort of faith in a future life.

In the Federated Malay States, negrito communities are still to be seen in the sub-districts of Selama and

Matang and in Upper Perak. At one time they were to be found on colonial territory as well; but the last Semang (who "twittered like a bird" according to the enumerator) was recorded from Province Wellesley at the census of 1891. Elsewhere also they are dying out. There are about twenty-six "Swamp-Semang" near Ijok and three in the Matang district. A special interest attaches to these few surviving coast-negritoes because of their isolation and comparative freedom from Sakai influence and admixture.

In Upper Perak negritoes are known to inhabit the banks of the Perak river from Lenggong to its source. They go there by the name of "Sakai Jeram." Mr. Berkeley, the District Officer, who knows them well, writes of them:

> "They live on the flat near the Perak river though they make very little use of it and are poor men on a raft or in a rapid. They speak a different language to the Sakai Bukit, with many words the same. They are usually thin and small, and often show signs of skin disease (*kurap*). They never wash. Yet the Sakai Bukit confess to being afraid of them, and they undoubtedly are. They plant rice, bananas, and all sorts of things, but never plant enough, and are always in a state of hunger and want. They live in wretched houses and shift quarters very often."

Racially they are of a pure negrito type, but in the matter of culture they are in constant relation with the Northern Sakai and with the Malays. Their language is nearer Northern Sakai than the Semang of Ijok, though they show a racial inability to pronounce the letter *r*. They were visited by Mr. Nelson Annandale, who was misled by their name into believing them to be expert boatmen, and whose assertion that they were "sensitive to wet" may be taken as an anthropologist's equivalent

for Mr. Berkeley's plain Saxon statement that "they never wash."

On the mountain-range separating these negritoes of the Perak river from the negritoes of Ijok are a few nomadic negritoes who are described as "Hill Semang" or *Sĕmang Bukit*. They have no very distinctive tribal character, being in relation with both the *Sĕmang Paya* on one side and the *Sakai Jĕram* on the other. Some of them were photographed and measured by a distinguished ethnologist with rather cruel consequences; the illnesses that chanced to follow on this experience were ascribed to the photographer, with the result that many of the Semang died—perhaps of fright—and the rest fled. "The aggressive ways of the modern anthropologist," as one member of the Institute described them in a playful way, may be productive of misery and death when applied without consideration to these poor superstitious savages.

On the banks of the streams that flow into the Perak river near its source there is found a small and little-known negrito tribe that goes by the Malay name of *Sakai Tanjong* or *Sakai Jĕher*. Mr. Berkeley writes of them:

"They live in the Singoh, Sera, and many other rivers on both sides of the Perak. They clear no jungle and plant nothing at all, but live on jungle roots. They are terrible thieves and steal from the clearings of the Bukit and Jeram Sakai. Still they are careful to avoid encroaching on the territory of their neighbours, even if their neighbours have ripe jungle fruit and they have none and there is only a little stream dividing them. They live in huts made of a few palm-leaves bent over and they hang about villages to help to pound or harvest *padi*. They talk an absolutely distinct language (as compared with the Sakai Jeram and Sakai Bukit) and appear very closely akin to the Semang on the Kedah slope."

The dialect of these *Sakai Jĕher* is distinct, as Mr. Berkeley points out, from that of the negritoes of the Perak valley (who have really exchanged their own language for the speech of their Sakai neighbours), but it is closely akin to the Semang dialect spoken by the swamp-negritoes of Ijok and also to that spoken by the Pangan negritoes of Kelantan. Quite apart from the evidence of race there can be no doubt of the Semang affinities of these *Sakai Jĕher.*

The so-called "Semang of Plus" may be ignored. True negritoes may be found occasionally in the low-lands of the Plus valley; but they are either nomadic *Sakai Jĕram* from the Perak river or nomadic *Pangan* from Kelantan. Moreover, as we have seen, the term "Semang" is applied erroneously to the Plus mountain-tribes that are not true negritoes. The *Pangan* of Pahang may also be disregarded, as their real habitat lies in Kelantan and outside the geographical limit of this paper. The negrito tribes of the Federated Malay States are three in number: the *Sĕmang Paya*, the *Sakai Jĕram*, and the *Sakai Jĕher*. It is difficult to find any racial or cultural difference between them, beyond the fact that those nearest the Sakai have borrowed a certain amount of their neighbours' culture and show slight traces of Sakai blood. In the matter of language the distinction is marked more clearly: the *Sĕmang Paya* speak a Semang dialect and cannot pronounce the letter *r*;[1] the *Sakai Jĕram* speak a Sakai dialect but retain many Semang words as well the inability to sound the letter *r*; the *Sakai Jĕher* speak a Semang dialect but are able to use the letter *r*.

[1] They soften it to *y*.

A difference has also been drawn by making the bow a Semang and the blow-pipe a Sakai weapon. I am disposed to question this distinction. The negritoes use a very simple blow-pipe and quiver of a type never found among other tribes, but they also share with their fairer neighbours the use of the bow and of the elaborate Northern Sakai blow-pipe and quiver. The quiver that is used by the Semang only is a small and simple appliance, ½ inch to 2 inches in width, containing very few darts, and stoppered by the use of a handful of leaves. It is worn with the aperture turned downwards so as to prevent the rain soaking through the stopper and spoiling the dart poison. But the quiver that is used by the Northern Sakai and by the Semang tribes in their vicinity is the most elaborate quiver in the Peninsula; it is very large (2½ to 4 inches wide), highly adorned, and closed by a well-fitting cover of woven fern-fibre. It is difficult to believe that the low culture of the negritoes is equal to such fine work (though it is equal to obtaining blow-pipes and quivers by barter for jungle produce); still less that it is equal to making the iron-tipped arrows that are associated with the Semang bow. The fact that the bow is the weapon of the Andaman Islanders is sufficient to explain why its occurrence in the Peninsula was ascribed to the Peninsular negritoes. Such a theory may be true of the past, but at the present moment the blow-pipe is the true weapon of both Sakai and Semang.

THE NORTHERN SAKAI.

On the main range of the Malay Peninsula from Gunong Berembun in the south to the extreme limits of Perak in the north there are found certain aboriginal

tribes that possess a distinctive culture of their own. To begin with, they live in large substantial communal houses like the Dyaks of Borneo—not in leaf-shelters like the Semang, nor in cranky huts like the Central Sakai of Batang Padang. In the second place, they are good craftsmen, making excellent blow-pipes, elaborate quivers, powerful bows, and even iron-tipped arrows. As regards physique they are taller and stouter than their aboriginal neighbours; moreover, they are cleanly in their habits and suffer little from skin disease. Although they are migratory they are less so than the other wild tribes, and their crops take longer to mature. For an aboriginal race their standard of culture is so high that it entitles them to be regarded as a distinct tribe or element in the population of Malaya.

But when we come to define their exact relationship to the other wild tribes we have many difficulties to face. These Northern Sakai have no objection to intermarriage with other aborigines and show many traces of mixed blood. In the extreme north they are dark with every sign of Semang affinity; in the south they show no such sign. Culturally they stand far above both the Central Sakai and the Semang. In the matter of language they possess words that are traceable neither to Semang nor to Central Sakai. On the whole, the Northern Sakai may be regarded as a mixed tribe containing some peculiar racial element that has raised them above their neighbours. What that element is we cannot say, but we cannot dismiss the tribe as a mere cross between the negritoes of the north and the Central Sakai to the south.

The Northern Sakai may be divided into two or even

three subdivisions. One large section of the tribe occupies the mountainous country to the north of the rivers Piah and Plus, and has been left untouched by European or Malay influence. Of these people, the *Sakai Bukit* of the local Malays, Mr. Berkeley writes:

"They live along the hills from Ulu Piah to the north, rarely below 2,000 feet, although they make clearings lower down. They are tall, active, well-fed, very clean, and bathing often. They plant tubers of many sorts, sugar-cane, millet, good kinds of bananas—also *pandan* and *mĕngkuang* for their baskets. They build good houses, generally on the ground, with walls ten feet high, like a Chinese cooly-house, but sometimes well above the ground."

These *Sakai Bukit* are the men described by Mr. Annandale under the name of *Po-Klo*.

The large communal houses that are so distinctive a feature of the culture of this tribe have been seen in many places. Mr. L. Wray found one in the valley of the Plus and another (I believe) near the upper waters of the Telom. Mr. Hale records a similar house from Ulu Kinta. Mr. Annandale seems to have seen them (through a telescope) from Temengor. And this recorded evidence can be supplemented by unpublished testimony. Mr. Berkeley has found communal houses at various places on the mountains of Upper Perak. Survey parties have reported them from Gunong Grah. The late Mr. Woodgate when surveying in the vicinity of Cameron's plateau came across one of these long houses in which he counted the hearths of fifteen families. A French mining engineer, M. Descraques, in the service of the Société des Etains de Kinta, had a similar experience. When sent out on a prospecting trip into the Batang Padang mountains (behind Kuala Dipang) he found that the Central Sakai aborigines of the foot-hills

refused to accompany him beyond a certain elevation as they objected to enter the territory of an alien race speaking a different tongue. Pressing on with only one companion he came upon an extensive clearing where he saw a large communal house raised on posts to a height of some four feet from the ground. He described the occupants of this house as men of heavy build and sullen expression, who showed no hospitality and were even menacing in their attitude, though they did not go so far as to attack him. Mr. Henggeler when travelling on the mountains between Perak and Kelantan (at a height of about 4,000 feet) had another experience of the same sort. He found a clearing with a long unoccupied communal hut. He and his party camped there for the night. During the small hours of the morning some fifty Sakai entered the house and sat round the intruders, glaring at them and declining to speak Malay though one or two seemed to understand what was being said. They refused to sell or barter anything; and when it was daylight they followed Mr. Henggeler for some distance beyond the limits of their clearing. So much for the testimony of European eye-witnesses. Of other evidence there is also a good deal, in the form of statements by Malays and by the aborigines themselves.

Clearly, therefore, communal houses are to be found throughout the Northern Sakai area, from Temengor in the north to the Batang Padang mountains in the south. But they are only to be found at great elevations. The aborigines of the foot-hills build huts like the Malays and have assimilated a great deal of Malay culture, though in language and physique they resemble the *Sakai Bukit* of the highlands. All that

we know about the beliefs of the Northern Sakai has been learnt from these low-country tribes and cannot be proved (at present) to be true of their wilder neighbours. It may, however, be surmised that the "tame" aborigines differ from the "wild" only in the fact that they have discarded their old communal houses and the use of the bow and are losing other racial traits such as the making of bark-cloth and the painting and tattooing of the face. Briefly, they are becoming sophisticated; one of them indeed has so far forgotten his tribal isolation as to find his way to the Taiping Gaol on a life-sentence for murder.

If we assume the beliefs of these low-country Northern Sakai to be identical with the ideas of their neighbours on the high hills, there is evidence to prove a close connection between the Northern Sakai and the Central Sakai. That evidence is as follows. In the year 1892 there died of fever on Gunong Riam in Ulu Kinta a Trigonometrical Surveyor, the late Mr. Williams. This unfortunate gentleman spent the last weeks of his life in noting down the language and customs of the Sakai around him. His vocabulary of Northern Sakai contains between 400 and 500 words and represents the best linguistic material available for the study of this tribe. His notes on custom are less valuable, but they contain some very striking passages:

"In regard to the disposal of the body after death, some bury their dead, others build a hut high enough above the ground to permit of a full-grown man passing under it. The hut is roofed in and covered on all sides. With the body are placed food, water, luxuries in the way of tobacco, betel, etc.—a little, in fact, of everything used in life, including clothing and weapons. For three days a fire is kept lit at the grave; then it is deserted for a fortnight, when

the relatives return and keep a fire burning for twenty days. This completes the ceremony.

"Should the victim come to his death by a tiger none of these ceremonies are performed because the tiger is feared and is understood to take upon itself the necessary formalities and expenses of the usual ceremony.

"It is only the *pawang* who is laid out in a hut after death; all others are buried. The grave is the depth of an ordinary man's height. The position of the head at death is noted: and when the body is laid in the grave it is laid in the same direction."

This curious distinction between a magician's burial and that of an ordinary man finds an exact parallel in the customs of the Central Sakai who bury the common folk but expose the body of the sorcerer in a hut. The respect paid to tigers is also a Central Sakai trait; while from another passage in Mr. Williams' notes it is clear that he was kept in ignorance of the real names of his aboriginal followers. The significance of these details will appear in the account that will be given of the *Mai Darat* of Batang Padang and Gopeng. The general conclusion to be drawn from Mr. Williams' observations seems to be that the Northern Sakai and the Central Sakai share the same religious beliefs—a very important point of connection between these two tribal divisions. Another detail of this sort is the common practice of tattooing and painting their faces—a practice that is not to be traced in the other three Sakai divisions. But there are also great dissimilarities. The Northern Sakai are cleanly in their habits; the Central Sakai are the reverse. The Northern Sakai keep to the heights; the Central Sakai (with certain notable exceptions) prefer to live at an elevation lower than 2,000 feet. The Northern Sakai blow-pipe is a better weapon than its Central Sakai counterpart, while the quivers are of very

different types: that in the north is adorned with elaborate incised patterns and is covered with a woven stopper or cap of stiff black or dark green fern; while that in the south is plain and unadorned, and has a soft and loose cover of light-coloured matwork. Again, the Central Sakai preserves keenly the purity of his race and is (in places) of a very distinctive and uniform physical type; the Northern Sakai is not of uniform type and does not seem to possess the same feeling of race-jealousy. These are differences enough—apart from language, facial appearance, the long communal houses and the use of the bow—to justify the separate classification of the Northern and the Central Sakai.

The bow should not, however, be regarded as the national weapon of the Northern Sakai. The blow-pipe has superseded it in daily use as the instrument with which the savage kills the birds and small mammals that he eats. Even as a weapon of war—and war is extremely rare—the arrow is a clumsy and costly weapon when compared with the dart. It is as a deterrent or terrifier that the bow is famous. With all deference to Mr. Cerruti, the Sakai dart has little penetrating power, does not fly far, and can be turned aside by a thick suit of clothes. Not so the arrow, which travels a great distance and inflicts a ghastly wound. Rare, clumsy and costly though its use may be, the Northern Sakai bow is known by name to tribes that neither see it nor make it; and all their stories of the bow unite in locating it in the great mountain mass inhabited by the Northern Sakai. It is from these tribes, and from the Semang who trade with them, that every specimen of the Peninsular bow has been obtained.

THE CENTRAL SAKAI.

On the main range of the Malay Peninsula between Mount Berembun in the north and Tanjong Malim in the south we find a third race of aborigines—the "Central Sakai" of Blagden, the "Senoi" of Clifford, the "Mai Darat" of Annandale and Robinson and "My Friends the Savages" of Cerruti. Of these varied designations the first is the least confusing, now that we know that the Northern Sakai of the Plus valley, a different race, also speak of themselves as *Senoi* and *Mai Darat*. The Central Sakai have abrupt racial frontiers both to the north and to the south. Question a *Mai Darat* of the upper Kampar valley and you will be surprised to find that he knows next to nothing about the Ulu Kinta aborigines from whom he is only separated by a low spur of the great range. It is the same in the south when we come to the Besisi border. The line of demarcation is clear and unmistakable; there is no mixed tribe, no half-way house, so to speak, to break the transition from one race to another. To the east, however, where the same tribe meets the Jakun, things are different; we meet there with curious mongrel communities, half Jakun and half Senoi, with a patchwork language and culture that we cannot classify with any definiteness. But there is nothing known as yet to explain why the Central Sakai should intermarry with their eastern neighbours while refusing all intercourse with the tribes to the north and to the south of them.

The culture and customs of the Central Sakai are the special subject of the second portion of this pamphlet, so that at this stage we are only concerned with the place of this tribe in the ethnology of the Peninsula. There can be no doubt that its closest affinities are with its

neighbours to the north. The two races share the same beliefs and possess the same type of tribal sorcerers, the same double system of burial and the same practice of tattooing and painting the face. The languages, too, are very closely connected; and it would not be surprising to learn that the elaborate grammatical structure of the language of the *Mai Darat* of Kampar is to be found also in the speech of the alien *Mai Darat* of the Plus. This represents a very intimate relationship indeed as compared with the position of the same tribe relative to the Semang, the Besiṣi and the Jakun. Even in little things the relationship shows itself: the songs of the Northern and Central Sakai are alike meaningless, while those of the Besisi and Semang are full of meaning; the men of the Northern and Central Sakai conceal their names from strangers, while the Besisi, Jakun and Semang make no such concealment; the numeral systems of the two races are also akin. But while these two Sakai tribes are related more closely to each other than to the rest they differ from one another in some important details. The Northern Sakai are a cleanly race; the Central Sakai are dirty to a disgusting degree. The Northern Sakai know the use of the bow; the Central Sakai do not. The Northern Sakai build long communal houses of very massive construction; the Central Sakai live in flimsy huts. The Northern Sakai make large communal clearings where they live for two or three years at a time; the Central Sakai have only small family clearings which they abandon till the crop is ready for harvesting. One might almost suspect the Central Sakai of being a degraded offshoot of the northern race were it not that it seems to be the purer race of the two. The Northern Sakai intermarries readily with other races; the Central

Sakai refuses to do so. The racial type of the aborigines of Sungkai and Slim is unmistakable and has no parallel anywhere else in the Peninsula. It suggests a pure race, a highly specialised physical type, and not a decadent offshoot of the more powerful Northern Sakai.

For an aboriginal tribe the Central Sakai are well-known to Europeans. Signor Cerruti lived with them; Dr. Rudolf Martin measured them; Sir Hugh Clifford studied them; Messrs. Annandale and Robinson visited them; and "Professor" Vaughan-Stevens associated them with the most sensational of his many stories. They may be regarded as the "stock" or "show" Sakai of the Peninsula, the aborigines who will be exhibited to the globe-trotter when that ubiquitous gentleman begins to overrun this country. But between them and their visitors there remains always the barrier of a racial suspicion that is not to be overcome and of a language of overwhelming difficulty. Much is known, but much more remains to be known. It is uncertain whether their country has been fully explored. From the mountains behind Sungkai and Slim, the very home of the purest Central Sakai, there come rumours of the existence of the long communal houses, the larger clearings and the more organised communities that we associate with the Northern Sakai culture. As tangible evidence of some such mystery collectors have obtained from this region—the region furthest removed from the Northern Sakai area—blow-pipes and quivers that show signs of a better craftsmanship than that of which the Central Sakai are capable. Moreover, while the true "Senoi" quiver is plain, the quivers brought down from these distant hills are covered sometimes with incised patterns suggesting the art of the north. In spite of

all the evidence that has been collected about the Central Sakai I am not satisfied that we know enough.[1]

It must be remembered also that the Central Sakai families do not wander at will over the whole of the area where their language is spoken; they confine themselves to the valleys in which they were born. The *Mai Darat* communities live in the lower valleys; the *Mai Bĕrtak* and *Mai Miloi* are known to occupy certain portions of the higher slopes. All these are kindred "Central Sakai" tribes. But we are not in a position to say that the whole of the mysterious upper country is occupied by the *Mai Bĕrtak* and *Mai Miloi*. It may be otherwise. And until we know more about the Northern Sakai—the most highly civilised yet the least known of all the Sakai races—it would be unsafe to dogmatise too freely about the ethnological position of their nearest relatives, the well-known Central Sakai of the Batang Padång mountains.

THE BESISI.

When the Portuguese were in possession of Malacca they found that their hinterland was occupied by two aboriginal races, the Cellates who are marked on the old maps as inhabiting Sungei Ujong and the Benua of Mount Ophir and beyond. There is some doubt as to the Malay equivalent of Cellates. The word has been interpreted variously as *Orang Laut*, *Orang Sĕlitar* and *Orang Sĕlat*, but none of these explanations can be regarded as adequate. The territory inhabited by the Cellates is that occupied by the aboriginal Besisi and not by the *Orang Laut* or *Orang Sĕlitar* who live elsewhere.

[1] Since writing the above I have learnt from a European eye-witness of the existence of a communal house—with five hearths—on the mountains behind Ulu Yam in Selangor. This extends the North Sakai area a long way southward though still confining it to the higher ranges.

The third suggestion, *Orang Sĕlat*, could only apply to the Singapore aborigines, who likewise are not Besisi. Perhaps Cellates is the equivalent of *Sisi Laut* or *Besisi Laut*, a name still borne by the Besisi of the Jugra coast. Be that as it may, the Cellates of the Portuguese correspond exactly with the Besisi of to-day and occupy the same area. Moreover, Albuquerque tells us that the old kingdom of Malacca itself was created by the fusion of a party of fugitive Malays from Singapore with a local settlement of these aborigines on the Malacca river. This tribe is interesting if only for the influence that it must have exercised on the formation of the Peninsular Malaya of to-day.

The Besisi are found on the western slope[1] of the Peninsular watershed from Tanjong Malim in the north to the end of the main range at Gunong Tampin in the south. They are also to be met with on the other side of the Malacca Straits, on Pulau Rupat and near Bengkalis; indeed, in all probability the Besisi are identical with the Sumatran "Sakai" who inhabit the great island as far as the borders of the Batak country. Their cosmopolitanism (for no maritime tribe can maintain a perfect isolation) makes them an uninteresting people of mixed blood and indeterminate customs. Nevertheless, they have certain characteristics that differentiate them markedly from the other aboriginal races—notably from the Central Sakai, to whom they present an antithesis that is almost perfect. The former, the Central Sakai, have a very simple patriarchal government; the latter, the Besisi, have an elaborate official hierarchy: a *Batin*, a *Jĕnang*, a *Jĕkra* and a

[1] Also at a few places on the Eastern slope—*e.g.*, at Langkap and at Pertang in Jelebu.

Pĕnghulu Balai. The former dwell in low lean-to shelters; the latter (in the interior at least) live in lofty tree-huts. The former are extremely superstitious; the latter are careless and sceptical in matters of belief. The former live on the mountains; the latter live mostly by the sea and find the hills a barrier instead of a home. The former have a most complicated grammar; the latter have one of extreme simplicity. The former have no poetry; the latter have much. The cultures of the two are distinct and the physical characteristics are also distinct, though the mixed blood of the Besisi makes it difficult to describe a Besisi "type." On the other hand, the Besisi approximate to the Jakun. The Jakun have the same elaborate official hierarchy with the same titles; they are a coast people; and they share the same connection with the sea. Moreover, they may be classified with the Besisi on grounds connected with their numeral systems: the Semang have one system (1, *nai*; 2, *bie*); the Northern and Central Sakai have a second (1, *ne*, *nanu*; 2, *nar*; 3, *ni*); the Besisi and Jakun have a third (1, *mui*; 2, *'mbar*; 3, *'mpe*). We thus see the numerals testifying to the association of the Northern with the Central Sakai and of the Besisi with the Jakun. But in both cases there are important reservations to be made. The Besisi numerals go to "three" only; the Jakun go as far as "seven." The Besisi have tree-huts; the Jakun have huts of the Malay type but raised on posts very high above the ground. The Besisi are indifferent to religion while the Jakun build elaborate graves that show an implicit belief in a future life. Differences of this sort are not negligible and fortuitous; they justify the separate classification of the two tribes.

The Besisi are found in small communities scattered about the coast of Selangor and Negri Sembilan where they have been for centuries under Malay domination. They have copied Malay houses and modes of life and retain very few of their primitive characteristics. Were it not for their very distinctive language it would be difficult to identify them at all. Moreover, the irreligion or agnosticism of the Besisi has taken all racial colour out of his customs. His funerals are unceremonious interments and he denies the possibility of a future life. As for evil spirits, "I wish we could see them," said a Besisi to me, "as we could avoid them and escape illness altogether." Here we have the widespread theory of the ghostly origin of disease—even a Malay accepts that view—but we have none of that horror of the supernatural which is apt to accompany a belief of this sort.

The Besisi living by the southern slope of the great Selangor mountains are a shy unwarlike people who have accepted without resentment the terrible wrongs inflicted on them by past generations of Malays. Ask for the family history of many of these aborigines and you will be told a harrowing tale of the cold-blooded and unprovoked murder of their parents—narrated calmly as though such murders were the most natural thing in the world. There is something almost uncanny in the patience with which such injuries were borne. There is something pitiful, too, in the uncomplaining manner with which these men accept their lot of inferiority to the petty traders who exploit them ruthlessly from day to day. Except for their tree-huts and their tribal pattern of blow-pipe and quiver the Besisi of the foot-hills seem to have no distinctive culture

of their own. They wash for tin in the mountain streams, sell the fruit of old abandoned orchards in their forests, and collect jungle produce for barter with the Malays. A few have found employment on rubber-estates; some, indeed, have come under the influence of Roman Catholic missions and been converted to Christianity. Here we have nothing of the shyness or suspicion that makes the Central Sakai hold themselves aloof from the outer world and limit all intercourse with it to a single tribal emissary, the *kĕpala nong*. Indeed, the Besisi seem to prefer dependence on others: they are a parasitic race with few tribal crafts and industries. But like all races that are patient under sorrow and tribulation they do not die out. For four centuries and a half, from the days of Mudzafar Shah of Malacca down to the present time, history tells us that these Besisi have been an exploited and persecuted people. Throughout this period they must have been absorbed by hundreds into the general Malay population through conversion and intermarriage, besides having lost hundreds more of their number through violence and murder, yet they seem to be as numerous as they ever were, even if they have failed to act up to the saying that "the meek shall inherit the earth." In time doubtless they will lose their language and become indistinguishable from the Malays. But they will not die out: and this racial vitality of the Besisi is one of the very features that differentiate the tribe from other aboriginal races like the Semang, who retreat slowly before the advance of civilisation and perish miserably when the opening-up of the country robs them of their old hunting-grounds and drives them further back into the inhospitable mountain ranges of the interior.

THE JAKUN.

Scattered about the State of Johor are a number of small communities of people known generically as *Jakun*, *Bĕnua Jakun* and *Orang Bĕnua*. They are obviously the "Binuas Satyros" of the old Portuguese maps, but they have lost their language and most of their customs and have taken to Malay, except for a few doubtful words that have puzzled etymologists. Schmidt failed to make anything of Jakun; and Blagden, in the absence of real data, elected to class the Jakun dialects in a linguistic group of their own, with such reservations as "much doubt must remain whether it can be considered as a unity," and again (of one dialect) "Kenaboi must be regarded as the best specimen of Jakun recorded or else as not being Jakun at all." Cryptic utterances of this sort are generally a scientist's way of classifying the unknown.

Under the circumstances there was a good deal to be said in favour of the well-known old recipe, "First catch your Jakun." He was not an easy person to capture. All that was known—or believed to be known—about him was that he used a wooden blow-pipe, buried his dead in a characteristic type of grave, and spoke a language that represented one or more linguistic groups of its own. It was no use looking for him in Johor for, whenever caught there, he only spoke Malay. He was said to retain his native language and culture in certain parts of the Negri Sembilan, on the Upper Rompin, on the minor rivers between the Rompin and the Pahang, and especially in the Kuantan district. In the Negri Sembilan he was captured repeatedly, but whenever questioned he spoke a minor Sakai dialect classified by Blagden as a "South-Eastern Subdivision of Besisi."

The Jakun group of languages seemed to be receding further and further away.

In the meantime certain other evidence was being secured. While the language had become more remote, the blow-pipes and graves were coming nearer. A specimen of the wooden blow-pipe was collected from the vicinity of lake Bra in the heart of the "South-Eastern Sakai" country; and Jakun tombs were reported in other parts of the country occupied by this same tribe. The general conclusions at this stage seemed to be that the radius of Jakun culture was more extensive than had been suspected and also that "South-Eastern Sakai" was a more important language than the fragmentary information at Blagden's disposal had led him to infer. A little later a "South-Eastern Sakai" vocabulary collected by Mr. Sturrock of Temerloh contained a very suggestive item—the word Jakun itself (*jah-kun*) with the meaning "man" attaching to it. This may seem a small matter, but every ethnologist knows that tribal names (*e.g.*, Clifford's *Senoi*, Annandale's *Hami*, the *Mai* in *Mai Darat*, and perhaps the word *Sĕmang* itself) are often the word for "man" in the dialect of that tribe. Nor could there be any doubt about Mr. Sturrock's accuracy, in view of the fact that the two component parts of *jah-kun* (*jah*, person; *kun*, male) appeared with their correct meanings in Blagden's own vocabulary. Slowly the conclusion seemed to be forcing itself upon me that the mysterious Jakun language was simply "South-Eastern Sakai" and that the existence of a separate linguistic group or groups was a myth. But corroboration was wanted from centres that were Jakun beyond all doubt—from the Rompin and its neighbouring rivers and from Kuantan. Unfortunately, I never succeeded in

getting a vocabulary from the Rompin river itself. From one of the rivers very near it I got a short word-list; it was pure "South-Eastern Sakai." In the end, by the assistance of Mr. J. P. Swettenham, of Kuantan, I secured a full vocabulary of Jakun from the Kuantan district, where the first wooden blow-pipes were found. That also was "South-Eastern Sakai."

It seems clear now that "South-Eastern Sakai" is not a local patois of Besisi but a language spoken from end to end of the area over which the Jakun culture extends. Moreover, this dialect contains the word "Jakun." Under the circumstances, Blagden's theory that Jakun is a separate linguistic group must be abandoned; the language must be classified as a "Sakai" dialect along with the rest. Indeed, it is allied so closely to Besisi that Blagden himself failed to draw any very broad line of demarcation between the two.

We have dwelt already upon the close connection in culture between the Jakun and the Besisi. Both have the same elaborate official hierarchy—the *Batin*, *Jĕnang* and *Jĕkra*; both dwell on the plains and are connected with the sea; both associate freely with the Malays. While the foundation of Malacca is associated with the Besisi, that of the Negri Sembilan is associated with the Jakun.[1] We now turn to the differences. The Jakun blow-pipe is made of wood; that of the Besisi is made of bamboo. The Jakun does not build tree-huts; he only raises his house on very lofty pillars. Lastly, he believes implicitly in the future life of the soul.

The following description of a Jakun grave will be of interest, if only for purposes of contrast with the

[1] Incorrectly, I believe. The *Jakun* of Negri Sembilan tradition seem to me to be the tribe known as Mantra, Blandas, or Biduanda.

burial customs of the Northern and Central Sakai. The account is taken from the diary of a trigonometrical surveyor working in the Negri Sembilan.

"I visited the grave of a Jakun Chief. . . . The grave had a bark-roof standing on poles about 4 feet high to protect it. The base of this grave had four round logs, 4 inches in diameter, round it, forming a rectangular space 8 feet by 3 feet. The space between these logs was filled with pugged clay. On top of this clay were four logs of lesser dimensions about the length and width of a body, and the space between these logs had been filled in also with pugged clay. . . . On top of these smaller logs were four planks standing on edge, each plank erect and just inside each of the logs. The two side-planks were resting on the logs which marked the length of the body. The other two planks—at the head and foot—were slotted into the side-planks.

"These planks were crudely carved on the side at each end and were further ornamented with black charcoal lines.

"At the head and foot of the grave (inside the planked space) were two memorial boards. One was covered with the dead man's singlet; the other had his towel. Two calabashes and a half coconut-shell also rested on the ground.

"I understood from my Malay companion that the body is usually placed about 3 feet deep, rolled in a mat.

"This grave had a small ditch (about 6 inches broad by 6 inches deep) dug round it."

It may be added that the "memorial boards" were probably the *tangga sĕmangat* or "ladders of the soul," by which the spirit of the deceased is believed to mount to his home in the heavens; and that the "small ditch" is the moat on which the dead man paddles his ghostly canoe.

The numeral system of the Jakun is interesting, not only for its relative completeness—it goes to "seven" while all other Sakai numerals stop at "three"—but also because it indicates linguistically the source from which it came. It is close to Khmer, but still closer to

Mon. Evidently there were colonists sent to Pahang in early days by some highly civilised people; the old mining shafts prove it. The Jakun aboriginal tribes who inhabit the country where the old mines were situated seem to have picked up from the colonists the numerals that they used, just as their fellow-tribes in the north and west are now learning the Malay names for all numerals over "three." The Jakun numerals, like the relics of the ancient kingdom of Ligor, indicate that it was the western and not the eastern branch of the great Mon-Khmer culture that influenced the Peninsula. This fact is to be regretted from the standpoint of historical research since it is the other branch—the Khmer or Cambodian branch—which is the more likely to attract investigators.

MIXED AND DOUBTFUL TRIBES.

We have seen that the boundary-line between the Sakai divisions is sometimes very easy to draw. In such cases, as at Sungei Raya and Tanjong Malim, the observer passes abruptly from one language and culture to another; but more often, perhaps, he finds that the change is effected through a whole series of mixed tribes. The Semang Paya fade gradually into the Sakai Jeram through the Semang Bukit; the Sakai Jeram change slowly into the Sakai Jeher through the Orang Kenchior of the Upper Perak River. In these instances the change is mainly linguistic; for all these tribes differ very little indeed in race and culture. But when we come to Western Pahang we find a long series of communities that are quite indeterminate; they borrow their words, characteristics and customs sometimes from Central Sakai, sometimes from Northern Sakai,

sometimes from Jakun, and sometimes even from Besisi. These aborigines seem to possess nothing that is distinctive; all that they have is traceable to one or other of their neighbours. Blagden did them the honour of classifying them in a special division as "Eastern Sakai"; he might not have done so on fuller data.

Perhaps the best known of these mongrel communities is the Sakai settlement on the River Krau in Pahang. For the purposes of this enquiry Mr. A. J. Sturrock collected a very full vocabulary of the Krau dialect and added the following note on the burial customs of the tribe:

> The Krau Sakai leave utensils on the grave: a cup, a plate, a water-vessel, a chopper (*parang*), and seven leaves, each loaded with rice. The relatives and friends have a feast at the burial-place, and the utensils are left that the deceased may satisfy himself before taking his final departure. They are left also with a more utilitarian end; for should the spirit go unfeasted to the other world he would, no doubt, return and trouble his neglectful relatives. Having had due respect paid him and due provision made to satisfy his last hunger, he goes in peace, never to return. There is thus no need to leave food for him in future, and, in fact, it is never done. The spirit never returns to the world; Sakai never see the spirits of their relatives or of anyone else. As regards the future life of the spirit nothing is known. He never reappears, and the Sakai philosophers do not trouble about him after he has been suitably sent on his last journey.

Here we have an exact replica of Central Sakai custom and belief. But along with this we get Jakun custom also:

> The grave is marked by a slab of wood, notched in such a way as to show it to be a grave but not so as to show who is buried there. There are separate abodes for the wicked and the good. The attributes of the former are the popular fiery ones. Of heaven there seems to be no definite conception except that it is pleasant enough

to live in. I asked for details of its pleasantness but could get none whatever. To reach heaven the spirit has to pass through hell, and is accompanied on the way by a cat and a dog, the cat going first and the dog last. On reaching hell the cat sprinkles water on the pathway and cools the atmosphere, while the dog performs the same duty behind the spirit. Where the water comes from I did not find out, nor what finally becomes of cat and dog. The flames burn underneath. The path to heaven lies through the centre of hell.

All this wealth of detail is quite foreign to Central Sakai belief.

If this account of the Krau Sakai was true of all these little mongrel communities it might be possible to analyse their customs and beliefs and to show their exact relationship to the purer tribes. Unfortunately, they differ among themselves. Let us leave the Krau Sakai and consider Mr. Sturrock's account of the Bra Sakai, who live much closer to the Jakun and Besisi border:

The Bra Sakai, like the Krau Sakai, leave utensils on the grave—namely, a cup, a plate, a water-vessel, and a block of wood to mark the grave. Regarding the utensils my informant was unsatisfactory. He said, and repeated, that they were left to mark the grave and with no other end in view; a statement which the nature of the articles appears to contradict. When I put it to him that they were there for the benefit of the deceased or his spirit, the Sakai denied it. After death, he says, there is nothing; all is finished. Then, however, when I asked him where the deceased went after death, he said he did not know; perhaps to another clearing and another house; but he did not know, he said; and he repeated that there was nothing after death. And probably to the present generation that is so. . . . There is no idea of a heaven and hell among the Bra men.

Here we have the Central Sakai utensils and the Jakun *tangga sĕmangat* or memorial board, combined with the purest Besisi agnosticism. Whatever the Besisi may believe, they assert persistently that they know of no life after death.

The Krau Sakai and Bra Sakai alike have chiefs whom they style *Batin* like the Besisi and Jakun. In other respects they differ from one another. The Krau men remember the North Sakai bow and describe it accurately even to the barbed iron point of the arrow, though they do not use it; the Bra Sakai know nothing of the weapon. The Krau Sakai do not use bamboo combs; but they have *bĕrtam* ear-ornaments (like the Central Sakai) and paint their faces. The Bra Sakai use bamboo combs, but no ear-ornaments and no paint on their faces. It is the same with the dialects of these mixed communities: the vocabularies differ from district to district, but nothing is distinctive; each word is traceable to some one or other of the main Sakai languages. Under the circumstances the aborigines of Western Pahang cannot well be classified; they are essentially mongrel or mixed.

A mixed or doubtful tribe of quite another type is that known to the Malays by local names such as "Blandas," "Biduanda" and "Mantra." The difficulty of classification in this case is due to the large Malay importations that have swamped the aboriginal elements in the language and left us with very little on which to base a standard of comparison. Yet there is something very distinctive about these Biduanda. They are not a coast people, but occupy the higher lands between the Besisi on one side and the Jakun on the other. They have some very remarkable beliefs, notably legends of the sun, such as suggest a connection with the Central and Northern Sakai. They are also very superstitious and believe in many spirits of evil. The Malay element in their speech is not a modern importation; it is often archaic and is common to the wilder as

well as the tamer tribes. But it so facilitates intercourse with other races as to cause the tribe to fuse rapidly with the Malay population and to disappear. At the present moment the purest Mantra or Biduanda communities are to be found in the great mountain mass about Gunong Hantu, between Selangor and Negri Sembilan. These communities are very nomadic and wander from the Ulu Kenaboi to the Pahang slopes of the great central range of the Peninsula. There they are said to possess a distinctive type of hut—a tent-like triangular arrangement with sloping sides and a bamboo flooring that is not raised to any height above the ground. Elsewhere this tribe is well known to European students through the "Mantra Mission" at Ayer Salak, in Malacca, an aboriginal religious settlement that is now little more than a name: the men's nomadic habits have taken most of them back to the jungle, while the women have preferred to marry into the more settled homes of the Chinese. When I last visited the settlement I could not find a single pure-blooded Mantra; the tribe cannot now be studied at Ayer Salak. Father Borie, the founder of the mission, knew and wrote a great deal about this tribe, but his writings suffer much from the fact that he had a thesis to support. That thesis was his belief in a prior conversion of the Mantra by the Apostle St. Thomas; and he cared for little else.

Another dubious tribe must be described as "Hervey's Kenaboi." The doubt in this case assails the very existence of these aborigines. Mr. D. F. A. Hervey, C.M.G., formerly Resident Councillor of Malacca, took down on two occasions from wandering Sakai calling themselves *Orang Kĕnaboi* vocabularies that show no affinity to any other language in the world. Mr. Hervey

is a reliable authority and his vocabularies carry weight; but a most careful investigation has failed to confirm them. The people who live in the Kenaboi valley and who go by the name of *Orang Kĕnaboi*, have been questioned and supplied vocabularies of their language, which turns out to be Mantra. Nine vocabularies in all have been collected for or by me in the localities where Hervey's Kenaboi might be found; yet none of these vocabularies bear out his informants' statements. Under the circumstances we must suspend judgment. It would be unsafe to base upon those two doubtful lists of words inferences that would modify very materially the present data about the wild tribes of the Peninsula.

A "doubtful" dialect of yet another sort is the so-called *Pantang Kapur* of Johor. This is an artificial language that may or may not contain traces of older tongues. The popular account of this form of speech is that it is used by camphor-seekers to deceive the spirits of the jungle wherein they work. These spirits understand Malay and would conceal the camphor if they overheard the plans of the seekers. All this sounds plausible and has been accepted—far too widely—as truth. But there is evidence that this explanation is due to the incurable Malay habit of romancing. The *Pantang Kapur* is spoken in one locality only, a locality in which little camphor is found. The language is worth investigating perhaps as an example of an artificial form of speech, but it does not possess much ethnological value.[1] Certainly there is nothing of special racial interest either in the words or in the people who use them.

[1] I have since obtained in Jelebu some words of an artificial language (of a type quite different to the *pantang kapur*) from an aboriginal *Orang Tanjong* who came from Bentong in Pahang.

In this brief sketch of the wild tribes of the Malay Peninsula we have passed in review the five great divisions of the aborigines and have referred briefly to the few communities that do not fall readily under one or other of the five heads. Far more, however, remains to be done. It is even uncertain whether in the recesses of our mountain forests there may not still survive some tribe like Hervey's Kenaboi that may throw quite a new light on the ethnography of the Peninsula. Some time ago in that very Kenaboi region a zealous policeman found one of our aborigines and arrested him without delay for not having taken out a licence for his dog. The unfortunate man did not know a word of Malay, spoke volubly in a tongue that no one could understand, and was discharged for want of an interpreter. He was last seen running as fast as his legs could carry him in the direction of the nearest jungle. Incidents of this kind will always keep the aborigines at a distance. To what tribe did that man belong? From the locality, one would have expected a Mantra; yet he was not a Mantra. We can never be sure that all the tribes are known. Apart, however, from this question of the present distribution of the aborigines there remains the question of their past distribution. The legend of the Sun eating his children is found as far south as the Mantra of Malacca. So is it with other beliefs. Tree-burial extends far to the north and to the south of the Sakai region. Only a short time ago the attention of a Negri Sembilan District Officer was drawn to a case where the natives refused to admit the death of a person whose tomb was well known. He made enquiries, and was informed that the deceased, who had been a sorcerer, was now a well-known tiger of the locality. Here again we have a

Sakai belief altogether outside the radius of the tribe with which it is associated. The study of the present dialects and customs of the wild tribes has been used in this pamphlet to differentiate between one aboriginal division and another and to indicate where each can best be investigated. A more exhaustive study of customs and beliefs and a careful analysis of the languages may help us to go many steps further, and to speak with some measure of confidence about the past history of the Peninsula and the origin and relative antiquity of the tribes that inhabit it.

PART II.—THE CENTRAL SAKAI.

As soon as the number of racial and linguistic divisions among the aborigines was known it was hoped that the investigation might be pushed a stage further by studying one of these divisions in detail at some convenient centre, for it was obvious that very little could be done by hasty visits to the wilder parts of the Sakai country. An opportunity presented itself in 1909 when I found a Sakai who was willing to leave his native valley and to teach me his language. He became homesick from time to time and had to be allowed frequent visits to and from his friends and relatives, but he remained with me for some three months of actual residence, giving me a vocabulary of some 2,500 words and a great deal of information about the manners and customs of his people. Of course the question suggests itself how far are this Sakai's statements to be trusted? I can only say that no leading questions were asked (a favourite source of error), and that all the information obtained from him was checked whenever possible by

vocabularies obtained from others and by Mr. Cerruti's account of the same tribe. As I always found my Sakai to be telling the truth on such occasions, I see no reason to suspect him of inaccuracy in cases where his statements could not be verified. Moreover, he was always consistent when asked the same question after the lapse of some weeks. With so extensive a vocabulary—2,500 words—consistency would be impossible if fraud was intended. True he was a "tame" Sakai; he was proud of his knowledge of Malay; and while this fact lessened the possibilities of any misunderstanding of my meaning or of his, it also led him to show off his knowledge by interlarding his Sakai stories with Malay words and metaphors. But he was not a Muhammadan, and the copiousness of his vocabulary will defend him against any suspicion that he had given up his own speech for the tongue of the foreigner.

His teaching was interesting also because it justified my fear that the information picked up by questioning casual aborigines was useless. It had been evident to me from the very first that Sakai had an elaborate grammar and was not to be understood by translating the Lord's Prayer or taking down a few sentences as had often been suggested as a means of judging idiom. The language is difficult owing to its curious phonology and its "silent" final consonants. I can only describe the sound by saying that the first part of the word is pronounced harshly and jerkily,[1] while the final letter is often whispered. The suppressed final in Malay suggests the principle; though in practice Malay is simplified by the fact that a "silent" final is always *k*

[1] The Sakai *o* is like *o* in "stock" or "stork," never like the *o* in "stoke." The *e* is also rather harsh like the French *è*, not *é*.

and need not be distinguished from a suppressed final *t*, *p*, *n* or even *ngy*.[1] If any European claims that he can speak Central Sakai, believe him not; the truth is not in him; a little cross-examination would soon dispose of such a claim. But for mere lexicographical purposes the final consonant may be brought out clearly by making the Sakai pronounce it before a second word commencing with a vowel. It can then be noted down. Three months do not represent a long period of study, it is true, and they were not sufficient to enable me even to approximate to the sound of Central Sakai. With the grammar it was otherwise. Things began to explain themselves in three months, though very gradually; and the explanations were not always what I had expected. It is, however, with the beliefs and customs of the Central Sakai that this brief sketch is concerned: questions of language must stand over for the moment.

The Central Sakai believe in a sun-god. They cannot be called sun-worshippers, for they make no offerings to their divinity nor do they hold services in his honour, but they call the sun "god"[2] and regard him as the source of all life and as immeasurably superior to the many ghosts and spirits of their mythology. There is no parallel in their minds between the power of their demons and the power of their god: the two work on different planes. But a Sakai is very reticent on the question of his religion and speaks in visible awe of the subject whenever he refers to it. The information as to their god came to me quite by accident when discussing the meaning of a word, nor could it be supplemented much by further questioning. My informant avoided talking about it. So far as I could

[1] Like the French *gn* in "cigogne."

[2] *Jĕnong*.

learn, the sun does not interfere in the affairs of men beyond providing life, heat and light. Was he all-virtuous? "No, he could hardly be called that," said my informant, "for he ate his own children." This Thyestean repast seems to have had its justification—for "if one sun is so hot how could mankind have borne the heat of many?"—but my Sakai had his doubts about the abstract morality of the sun's conduct. So too had the moon, for "she fled from the sun in order to save the lives of her own children, the stars. That is why the sun and moon are never seen in company: that also is why the sun lives alone while the moon is surrounded by numberless children."

Inferior though they are to the sun in their dignity and power, the great spirits of disease are of more importance to the Sakai because of their pernicious interest in his private life. Chief among them is the spirit of small-pox or *Nyani Tot*—but his true name must not be uttered, he is "the stranger, the new arrival."[1] He is a demon of appaling terror to these timid peoples of the hills, and he appears to them in dreams, wearing the guise of a great Malay Raja with a whole train of attendant ghosts. He has many rivals in wickedness. There is the *Nyani Ludau* who comes in the semblance of a Mountain Sakai,[2] wearing a pendent loin-cloth and carrying the deadly blow-pipe from which he shoots the invisible darts that cause racking pains in the joints, in the waist and in the bones. If he elects to use his worst weapons he kills instantaneously, but usually he desires the misery and not the death of his victim. He haunts bare rocks and the stony beds of streams; doubtless he is responsible for Mr. Cerruti's

[1] *Tĕloh.* [2] *Mai Miloi.*

statement that "the foaming torrents and noisy cascades that dash down the ravines have inspired the Sakai with terror."

Then there are others. There is the *Nyani Kĕngmok* who gives dysentery and diarrhœa: he wears the form of a dog. There is the *Nyani Ngôi*, of protean animal semblance, who gives hæmorrhage and pain in childbirth. There is the pig-shaped *Nyani Pĕnghônt* who gives cramp in the legs and arms. There is the *Nyani Lĕngwĕk*, shaped like a siamang, who gives stiff necks and headaches: he too has a euphemistic title, *mai ku-juhû*, or "the gentleman on the tree." For he loves certain trees—notably, the *jĕlutong*, the *pulai* and the larger species of *ara*. There is the *Nyani Sĕnget* (but it is safer to call him "the icy one," *mai pĕchir*) who looks like a Malay and gives you cholera. The *Nyani Bĕngket* brings fever, but he is not a *Nyani* of the regular type: he is born of the exhalations of the poison-tree at the navel of the seas—the tree that slew the gigantic Saurians[1] with which the world was once infested. In this case the victim dreams of fire. So too the spirit of toothache is a sort of white ant that gnaws at the roots of our molars and goes by the name of *Get*. The spirit of elephantiasis is formless—or if he has a form no dreamer has yet identified him—he is the *Nyani Sĕmĕlit*. Some ghosts have less insidious methods. The *Nyani Chĕnyen* looks like a child: he haunts the water (especially where the river is deep) and cuts at his victims with a small knife;[2] he eats his prey besides killing him. The ghost-bird or *Nyani Klâk* imitates the cry of a man and trades on the inquisitiveness of strangers. The victim approaches; the bird swoops; the spirit of life leaves

[1] Monitor-lizards (*biawak*). [2] The Malay *pisau paung*.

the man when he loses his wits during the momentary unconsciousness of a startling shock—but that moment is fatal: the bird carries off the spirit of life and the man sickens and dies of inanition. There is the vampire (*Chröng-Sôk*), human-shaped, long-haired, drinking the blood of its victims.

There are also the ghosts of special localities, of each holy place or *kĕramat* with which the country is dotted. These spirits are slow to anger, but they dislike being disturbed and are apt to let the troubler of their peace learn the impropriety of his behaviour. A thunder-storm is a favourite form of warning. On the other hand, the invisible elves of the forest,[1] the shy *Orang Bunian* of the Malays, are friendly to man and bring him luck. Some visible ghosts speak Sakai and hurt nobody, but they are exceptional. There are also monstrous animals that are believed to prey on man. There is the *Tungal Mau* or cannibal coconut-monkey that walks erect and is found in lonely uninhabited forests where he eats any Sakai who has a taste for exploration. There is the dragon[2] who lives under the earth and ought only to be referred to as "the person down below."[3] There is the Malay *Mawas* with arms of iron and an iron pot-shaped head in which it both cooks and eats its dinner. There is the *Klâng Blok*, or roc, a giant bird that has fortunately been an absentee from this country as far back as the memory of man can go; but who knows?—it may return. Then even well-known animals are bad enough in their way—the tiger who goes by many names lest he should take offence, and the crocodile who must be referred to politely as "our old friend in the water."[4] And all the Central Sakai

[1] *Mai Tĕpos.* [2] *Nanggan* = (Malay) *naga.* [3] *Krom te.* [4] *Ma-na pa-téu.*

believe in *Yéi* the Malay *Kĕlĕmbai*, the wizard who turned everything into stone and was driven out of the country in terror through his mistaking a toothless old man for the baby of some new gigantic race. *Yéi*'s house is shown on Mount *Iréu*; and *Gunong Banglak* contains the tomb of his son.

The Sakai's one protector against these evil spirits is the communal wizard, the *na-halau* or *mai-halau* as he is called. This gentleman is not a *pawang* in the Malay sense. The *pawang* is something of an impostor: he is a specialist in some pursuit to which the black art is only subsidiary. He is known to the Sakai as *pawâk*. The *na-halau* is a wizard pure and simple. He is a soothsayer and witch-doctor: he holds seances to predict the future, and can locate and extract from a patient's body the dart of the *Nyani Ludau*. A man like this is, of course, a great help to a superstitious people. He holds his seances by night only, squatting in a little bee-hive hut with his followers all gathered around it. He purifies himself by unwonted ablutions in cold water, burns incense, utters prayers and ends by being "possessed" by a familiar spirit[1] who descends and occupies his body. The ravings of the *na-halau* are the voice of the spirit: the audience takes note of what it can interpret. A woman may be a *na-halau* but rarely takes to the career.

The *na-halau* is associated in an extraordinary way with the Peninsular form of lycanthrophy, the were-tigers of Malaya. He is not buried when he dies but is exposed in a small hut or tree-grave along with certain simples and incense. On a certain night—the seventh according to Cerruti—the wizard's *gunik* (or familiar)

[1] *Gunik.*

appears in the form of a tiger, carries off the body, tears it open and releases the soul. If the heir of the dead man elects to keep vigil over his father's body and if he shows no fear, the tiger-spirit may initiate him into his father's black arts. He becomes a sorcerer there and then. But the supply of sorcerers by this process is not great; the death-rate is too high. The ordinary *na-halau* prefers some safer system of apprenticeship. Moreover, the position of a *na-halau* has its responsibilities as well as its honours. A wizard should know neither pain nor fear. If he utters a groan during his last illness he loses the honour of tree-burial: the tiger-spirit will have none of him. Indeed, many a wizard has lost his reputation when dead owing to the tigers declining to touch his body.

The strange dual system of burial, the ablutions, the alien type of hut used by the *na-halau* and the allusions to special formulæ in an unknown tongue seemed to suggest a foreign origin for these elements in the Sakai religion. In reply to repeated enquiries I was assured that the words used in invocations are Malay and that the power invoked is described invariably as *Sah-Sidik*. But whatever may be the Malay veneer over these practices the idea of tree-burial is too widespread in the north of the Peninsula—even in Siamese districts—to be explained as some abandoned Malay custom.[1] The use of foreign formulæ tends to show that these aboriginal tribes, however great their isolation, are not superior to the adoption of foreign customs and beliefs. Signor Cerruti gives a vivid account of the panic excited by an

[1] "The last chap to be buried in a tree in Perak," writes one of my informants, "was Pawang Kwa, who was stuck up in a *bangor* tree half a mile from the village of Raja Kayu between 1870 and 1875, as near as I can judge. Perhaps a little later. He is now a tiger with a white patch." This, of course, is of Malays.

eclipse of the moon. Yet the term for an eclipse[1] shows that the Sakai have accepted the old Indian legend of the moon being swallowed by the dragon *Rahû*. Even in dealing with so primitive a tribe as the *Mai Miloi* it is impossible to escape from traces of alien influence. Now and then a strange custom is revealed for which no parallel can be traced at the moment: still, we cannot be sure that it is confined to the tribe. The women of the *Mai Miloi* are reported to cut off their tresses whenever the giant-bamboo sheds its leaves. A rainbow is said to be created out of the blood of a tiger's victim and to rise from the spot where the victim has been slain. Such practices and beliefs seem unique—that is all that we can assert at present.

Turning from the religious to the political system we find that the smallest political unit among the Central Sakai is the family-group. Every family—by which is meant a living patriarch and all his descendants, and not a mere menage of husband and wife,—keeps together and keeps to itself; it does not unite with others for mutual protection and social intercourse. Exogamy means marrying into another family, not into another tribe. A number of these family-units living within a definite area and recognising a common hereditary chief make up the Sakai State—if such a term is permissible in the case of so small a community. Among the *Mai Darat* the chief is described by the Malay term *Pĕnghulu* (headman) and may even bear a high-sounding title such as *Maharaja Bĕlia Indĕra*, Chief of the Ulu Kampar Sakai, or *To' Sang*, Head of the Bujang Malaka Sakai. Among the *Mai Miloi* and *Mai Bĕrtak* the Chief's designation is *ra'nau*. A *ra'nau* settles disputes

[1] *Gĕchĕk ki-lip Rahû.*

between one family and another, and keeps peace generally in his tribe. The foreign relations of the community are looked after by a *kĕpala nong*. A *kĕpala nong* is a sort of go-between or interpreter who guides strangers through his own tribal area and sees that they do not get caught in any of the man-traps that beset the path; he also knows Malay and is known to the Malays to whom he goes on trade-missions with the produce of his tribe. This official is the one link between a Sakai community and the great world outside; his work enables the rest of the tribe to maintain a perfect isolation. A trespasser, if caught in a strange country, used to receive scant mercy; he was sold into slavery among the Malays. There was indeed a fixed price for such slaves in the days when the first British officers came to Kinta: two rolls of coarse cloth, a hatchet,[1] a chopper[2] and an iron cooking-pot.

Within the family-group property was held in common; and the unsuccessful hunter who did not contribute his proper quotum to the family cooking-pot received food from the others and a sufficiency of bad language as well. Sakai legends contain tales of idle prentices who were left by their industrious relatives to starve in the jungle, but the tone of the story condemns such a policy as unnatural and tells us how the idle ones were helped by sympathetic spirits till they triumphed over those members of the family who prized their dinner more highly than their family love. Communistic ideas are strong among the Sakai. At the same time, their communism does not imply liberty, equality and fraternity. There is a vast amount of ceremonious family etiquette and a host of technicalities regulating

[1] The Malay *bĕliong*.

[2] The Malay *parang*.

the mode of address of one member of the family to another. It is a serious offence for a young *Mai Darat* to address an elder by his personal name; such an address afflicts the person addressed with hydrocele. This belief makes a Sakai very chary about revealing his true name to strangers who may misuse the knowledge. He prefers to describe himself by some Malay designation that means very little. Judging by the fictitious names given to Surveyor Williams on Gunong Korbu the Northern Sakai show the same unwillingness and probably share the same belief. The close family relationship between the members of each of these small communities forces them to seek their husbands and wives outside it; for the *Mai Darat* object to the marriage of near relatives—even first cousins. Such marriages are incest, and "God will not have them."[1] Incest of this sort (for it does occur) is one of the few things that can stir an aboriginal community to its very depths. It seems to invite the divine wrath, and no Sakai feels safe till the scandal is put an end to. And as the Sakai political system has no means of compulsion or punishment for dealing with cases of this sort the tension becomes greater than ever.

When the *ra'nau* or Chief holds an enquiry he may, if he chooses, administer oaths and even ordeals. The oath is "May I be eaten by a tiger, may I perish under a fallen tree, may I be slain by a ghost," for these are the terrors that loom largest before the vision of a Sakai. Convert that oath into a curse—"may you be eaten by a tiger"—and you have the nearest approach to abuse of which a *Mai Darat* is capable. There is also a curious form of ordeal by holding molten tin in the hand, but

[1] *Jĕnong to'-ki-ok.*

this way of settling veracity is probably more talked about than practised.

The Sakai have many industries: agriculture, shooting and trapping for the men; plaiting and bark-cloth-making for the women. They are learning more. The *Mai Miloi*, for instance, are said to rear fowls for sale to the Malays. They use no fowl houses or runs; the fowls roost on the neighbouring trees. "But what of hawks and civet-cats?" is the natural enquiry of anyone who knows how poultry-farming of this sort would fare in his own less-favoured plains. The answer is simple: the *Mai Miloi* does not take to poultry-rearing till he has eaten every hawk and civet-cat in his neighbourhood. Indeed all the Central Sakai domesticate animals—wild pigs, wild dogs, rats and jungle-fowl—but they never eat their pets. The *Mai Darat* have taken kindly to rice-planting and have already invented a vocabulary of technical terms describing the various stages in the growth of the grain. The *Mai Miloi* and *Mai Bĕrtak* are more conservative; and even the older men of the *Mai Darat* sometimes refuse to eat rice. They prefer their own foods: millet, sugar-cane, gourds and tubers, which they plant in the most primitive way. A growing crop is not watched by the more primitive tribes: they plant it, fence it and surround it with traps, and then they go away; when the right season comes round they return to the clearing and gather the crop. During the interval they support themselves by shooting, by trapping and by finding wild fruit. Of course they are improvident and never store up food for the future; a Sakai may starve while his crop is growing, for there are seasons of famine when no wild fruit is in season and when birds and animals are scarce. The only Sakai

practice that suggests foresight is the curious one of making large fenced traps and ground-baiting them, perhaps for months, till the animals in the vicinity gain confidence with impunity and make the place a habitual resort. A trap of this sort would not be worth the trouble that it entails but for the fact that it enables a Sakai family to invite the whole country-side to a wedding or dinner without the haunting fear of the larder running dry. The family meals are catered for by less pretentious traps—noose-traps, spring-traps, pit-falls, and weighted spears that are dislodged by a catch and fall on an animal from above. It is said that the fine scent of an animal protects him until time has effaced completely the odour of the hands that made the snare. Old traps are therefore best; and the forest is full of them.

All shooting is done with the blow-pipe; the bow is known by name but never used. As a means of killing game the blow-pipe owes its efficiency to the fact that its darts are poisoned. Now poison inspires terror, and terror leads to exaggeration. The legend of the deadly upas-tree has reached Europe in a most sensational form, and even Signor Cerruti, who knows the Sakai well, expresses incredulity when his samples of poison do not prove very deadly on analysis. The facts are these. The principal poisons used by the Central Sakai for their darts are the sap of a large tree (*antiaris toxicaria*) and of a small creeper (*strychnos tieute*). The latter, as its name indicates, is a form of strychnine and is the more fatal. Besides these poisons the Sakai use other deadly things—the venom of the cobra, the sting of a centipede, scorpion or wasp—but use them so clumsily that their efficacy may be discounted altogether. The

two real poisons, the *anchar* and the strychnine, depend for their success upon their freshness, upon the skill with which they are prepared, and upon the amount that is injected into the wound. Moreover, the quality of the strychnine varies, as all plants vary, with the elevation at which it is grown, so that the great reputation of tribesmen like the *Mai Bĕrtak* is due to the height at which they live and not to any special skill possessed by them in preparing the poison. Again, the blow-pipe has no great propulsive force. Signor Cerruti's suggestion[1] that a true Sakai can send a dart through a man's body is incredible on the face of it, and can be disproved by a study of the dart itself. Very near the point of the dart will be seen a little notch cut in the wood. This notch is made in order that the point may break off and remain in the wound. There are technical terms in Central Sakai both for the point that adheres and for the part that breaks off, so that the notching is not the work of one or two men only. This practice would be useless if the dart penetrated to a depth of more than a quarter of an inch into the wound; and the stories of its passing through a man like a bullet may be put aside as the figments of a very lively imagination. But for small birds, mice, rats, squirrels and even monkeys a good brew of Sakai poison may be effective enough.

The *Mai Darat* are excessively unclean in their personal habits. Even their apologist, Signor Cerruti, admits this discreditable trait in their character. But there are degrees of uncleanliness; and the *Mai Darat*, filthy as they are, shudder at the dirtiness of the *Mai Miloi* who are credited with living on the vermin in each other's hair. It sounds rather paradoxical to add

[1] He makes it from hearsay and not on his own authority.

that the Central Sakai, with all their dirt, are great dandies in their own original style. They keep hairiness within bounds by the use of pincers, run a porcupine-quill through the cartilage of the nose, tattoo their foreheads and paint their faces with streaks of various dyes, wear garlands of flowers round their heads, paint their bark-clothes with different patterns, and put leaf-girdles round their waists. A line of these painted savages passing silently and in single file through the jungle is a very striking sight, strangely reminiscent of the stories of Fenimore Cooper. Moreover, the Sakai is a devotee of fine art in his way. He is musical, using three instruments—the nose-flute,[1] the bamboo-zither,[2] and the bamboo-drum or sounding-board.[3] He has regular tunes named and associated with these instruments: "plaintive longing" and "dear recollections" are the significant titles of two of his flute-pieces, while the zither-tunes are named after bird-notes, tree-felling, and other forest-sounds. The player on the *chĕntok* is a mere accompanist; love-songs and oratorios are not for his unaided efforts. In oral literature the Sakai are weak, even for a primitive tribe. The Semang sings of his monkey and the Besisi has his songs about the rhinoceros; but the Central Sakai can only string words together without rhyme or meaning or any use except that of displaying the power and range of his voice. Nor has he any proverbs or proverbial sayings. The *Mai Darat* of the plains have a few riddles (probably taken from the Malay) and a few polite metaphors of obvious foreign origin, such as "her beauty is like the newly-risen sun, she dazzles." Doubtless the young and travelled *Mai Darat* finds expressions of this sort very effective with

[1] *Chĕnilai.* [2] *Krep.* [3] *Chĕntok.*

the ladies of his tribe when he returns to them after his wanderings, but the more hardened Malays from whom he learnt his metaphors would only laugh at his accomplishments. The older men and women are said to have a rich stock of stories for children. The two or three tales that were narrated to me did not impress me favourably either for style or matter. A Sakai tale is related in a series of short jerky sentences with much repetition of detail and never a change of style. On the whole, I am inclined to think that Central Sakai will interest the philologist and the grammarian rather more than the litterateur.

There are artists in design also among the Sakai. The nests of the little bee known to the Malays as *kĕlulut* supply a material for polishing and colouring the surface of bamboo-quivers and blow-pipes and also for staining the punctures of the tattoo-thorn. The *prah*-fruit when left to rot in earth provides a rich dye. Other dyes are obtained from the *kijai*, the *kĕsumba*, the plant known as *gĕtah kayu*, and similar sources. The curious markings incised on bamboo-combs and on blow-pipes have been the subject of a very imaginative theory. The designs are conventional. A *Mai Darat* looking at a comb will enumerate the names of its panels: one is "the snake" (a scaly design); another, perhaps, is "a wild-cat" (a striped or spotted design); another "a gourd," from the shape of the gourd-seeds. The descriptions will not commend themselves as pictures to a European to whom "a wild-cat" suggests the outline of a cat; but given a sufficient range of such designs and a sufficient simplicity of pattern, a very ingenious man might represent whole sentences on a blow-pipe and make it resemble an obelisk of quaint

hieroglyphics. Of course the Sakai do not possess either the necessary multiplicity of patterns or the ingenuity to use them on the Egyptian plan, but the idea that they might do so—or did do so—suggested itself to the fertile imagination of Vaughan-Stevens as soon as his informants began "explaining" the panels on their combs. He found himself, as he concluded, face to face with the mother of all alphabets, the half-way house between the language of symbols such as flowers and the ideographic lettering of the Egyptians and Chinese. It would indeed have been a stupendous discovery if it had rested on any basis of fact. But unfortunately it did not. Though the panels are interesting as designs they are not used as hieroglyphics. To a Sakai they are things of beauty; art for art's own sake, and with no vile utilitarian motives to sully pure art.

In conclusion, it will not be out of place to supplement Signor Cerruti's account of the life of a Sakai from the cradle to the grave. The birth-customs call for no remark, except for the fact that the placenta and umbilicus are buried under human habitation so that the rain may not beat on them, and turn them into the angry birth-spirits that Malays believe in. Twins are objected to. When of different sexes one of the pair is given away in adoption, and anything suggestive of twins (such as a double banana) is never eaten lest the evil of a double-birth should follow. The education of a Sakai child is a very simple matter, but he plays no games in the European sense and has to be satisfied with imitating the pursuits of his elders. Betrothals are arranged by the parents—often at a very early age—though the inclination of the parties is not forced if they object

to carrying out the contract This is true, at least, of the *Mai Darat*: the *Mai Miloi* are said to be laxer, to leave everything to sexual passion, to have no marriage ceremonies, and even to exchange wives from time to time. Polygamy is tolerated though very rare. Among the *Mai Miloi* divorce is said to be as informal as marriage, and even among the *Mai Darat* of Tapah it is simply a matter for the parties to decide for themselves; among the *Mai Darat* of Kampar marriage is taken more seriously and is only dissolved if the elders of the community permit its dissolution, in which case a twig is broken solemnly to typify what is being done. In disease the only doctor is the *na-halau*. When a Sakai dies who is not a *na-halau* he is buried in the ground, and his blow-pipe, quiver, and chopper, with food enough for one meal, are left upon his grave to provide the soul with a repast preparatory to his last long journey. What happened if the soul was left unfed? "He would hunt up his relatives to know the reason why." Why only one meal? "Because one meal is enough to get him away from the spot—and that is all that the relatives want." And whither did the soul go on this last long journey? "Allah only knows," said my Sakai who had picked up many Malay expressions, "I cannot guess. I have heard our old men say that the soul goes to God, but what they meant by this is more than I can tell you." He may have known more than he choose to reveal, but this was all that I could learn from him. And, after all, few civilised men could give a better explanation.

APPENDICES.

I.

The following list of words (names of parts of the body in the different Sakai languages) is given to illustrate the relation of the five dialects to one another and the difficulty in the way of regarding them as belonging to more than one linguistic group in the matter of vocabulary. I do not, however, wish to question the possibility of their being regarded as belonging to different systems in the matter of grammar or ideology.

Semang (Sg.) includes Semang Paya and Sakai Jeher—both forms being given if different, the Paya form first. Sakai Jeram is not given as it is a mixed or intermediate dialect. In the case of North Sakai (N.S.), Central Sakai (C.S.), Besisi (B.) and Jakun (J.) alternative forms are given where the discrepancies in my vocabularies are serious; but small differences in spelling are not recorded.

COMPARATIVE VOCABULARY.

HEAD, *kui* or *koi* in all dialects.

EAR, Sg. *anting, 'nteng*; N.S. *gĕntok*; C.S. *'ntâk*; B. *tŏku*; J. *tong, tang*.

EYE, Sg. *med, mid*; N.S. *mat, ma^{n}*; C.S. *mat*; B. *met, me^{n}t*; J. *mot, möat*.

NOSE, Sg. *moh*; N.S. *muh, möh*; C.S. *moh*; B. *moh, muh*; J. *muoh, muöh*.

CHEEK, Sg. *kĕbang, kapor*; N.S. *kapor, kapong*; C.S. *ming, kĕming*; B. *gubuk*; J. *ming*.

MOUTH, Sg. *heng*; N.S. *nyar, nyang*; C.S. *'mpâk*; B. *pâku*; J. [*mulut*].[1]

LIP, Sg. *chaa, tĕnut*; N.S. *sĕntor*; C.S. *ngyingyoi*; B. [*bibir*]; J. [*bibir, bibik*].

TONGUE, Sg. *lĕtig, lĕnteg*; N.S. *lĕntak*; C.S. *lĕnta*; B. [*lidah*]; J. *lĕpis*.

TOOTH, Sg. *lĕmon, hain*; N.S. *moing*; C.S. *lĕmoing*; B. *lĕmoing*; J. *lĕmon, lĕmun*.

CHIN, Sg. *ankik, yungka*; N.S. *chakâ*; C.S. *jĕngkâ*; B. *jĕngkang*, [*daguk*]; J. [*dagu*], *gĕkâ*.

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[1] Words in square brackets are Malay or related to Malay forms.

NECK, THROAT, Sg. *chĕna-od, ngud*; N.S. *tangun, gĕlok*; C.S. (throat) *lĕngi, tong'n*; (back of neck) [*tangkok*], *rungkok*; B. [*tĕngkokn*]; J. *lĕngi* [*tangkuk*].

SHOULDER, Sg. *kĕlapai, klapo*[r]; N.S. *pô*[k], *pôg*; C.S. *gĕlpâl*; B. [*baho*[r]]; J. [*baho*[k]].

ARM, Sg. *bĕling, chĕndren chias*; N.S. (upper arm) *sapal, shapal*; (lower arm) *chĕndreng tik*; C.S. (whole arm) *kĕngrit*, (forearm) *chĕndreng tôk*; B. (upper arm) *chĕmer*; J. (forearm) *bĕling*.

ELBOW, Sg. *kayang, kĕning*; N.S. *kanyong*; C.S. *kanang*; B. [*siku*]; J. *chinchung, changchong*.

HAND, Sg. *chas, chias*; N.S. *tik*; C.S. *tök, tuk*; B. *tih, t'hih*; J. *t'hi, ti*.

THUMB, Sg. [*ibok*] *chas, tabok* (*chias*); N.S. *tabok*; C.S. *knöng tök*; B. *gĕnek t'hih*; J. *gadö ti*.

FINGER-NAIL, Sg. *tĕlkok chas, chĕndros*; N.S. *chĕndros*; C.S. *chĕngros*; B. *kukut*, J. *chĕros, chĕrus*.

THIGH, Sg. *bĕlak, bĕlok, bĕlut*; N.S. *bĕlek, bĕluk*; C.S. *lĕmpa*; B. *blu*; J. *blu*.

KNEE, Sg. *kĕltom, kaltong*; N.S. *karôl*; C.S. *kurôl*; B. [*lutut*]; J. *kaltong*.

LOWER LEG, CALF, SHIN, Sg. *gau, gor*; N.S. *kĕmong*; C.S. (lower leg) *kĕmong*, (calf) *pĕdöl kĕmong*, (tendon achillis) *kajek*; B. *kĕjôl*; J. [*bĕtis*].

FOOT, Sg. *chan*; N.S. *jûk*; C.S. *jûk*; B. *jökn*; J. *jong*.

HEEL, Sg. *doldol, duldul*; N.S. *dĕldul, kĕnul*; C.S. (back of heel) *chanong*, (underpart of heel) [*tumit*], (heel-pad of tiger) *kĕnöl*; B. [*tumit*]; J. [*tumit*].

SOLE, Sg. *tapak chan, tĕrba chan, dada chan*; N.S. *tapar-jûk, dada jûk*; C.S. *tapar jûk*; B. *tapak jökn*; J. *tampar jong*.

TOE, BIG TOE, Sg. *wong chan, tabok chan*; N.S. *tabok jûk*; C.S. *knöng-jûk*; B. [*jari*] *jökn, kĕnen jökn*; J. [*jari'*] *jong*.

BREAST, CHEST, Sg. *sawab*, [*dada*]; N.S. [*dada*], *dahub, bot*; C.S. (chest) *'ntöh*, (breasts) *mem*, (space between breasts) *chĕnop*; B. (chest) *ngâh*, (breasts) *tôh, tûh*; J. [*da'da'*].

BACK, Sg. *kiyok, krok*; N.S. *kruk*; C.S. *chĕlôt, kĕnok*; B. *chĕlôtn*; J. *chĕlôn*.

HEART, LIVER, Sg. *yus kanyais, klangis, rus*; N.S. *hâp, harus*; C.S. (heart) *nus*, (body of heart) *kĕbök nus*, (valve of heart) *tungkul nus*, (interior of heart) *sop nus*, (liver) *rís*, (spleen) *klâ*[p], (waist) *wôk*; B. *tungkul grís*; J. *grís, giris*.

STOMACH, INTESTINES, Sg. *chon, ĕch chon, ĕt*; N.S. *kŭt, ĕk*; C.S. (exterior of stomach) *köt*, (interior of abdomen) *ĕt*, (intestinal canal) *chong ĕt, ĕt wĕt*, (stomach proper) *ĕt pĕdöl*; B. *ö-öit, chong ö-öit*; J. *lĕpâtch, wĕt*.

NAVEL, Sg. *los, dut, dud*; N.S. *panik*; C.S. *sŏk*; B. *puneyh*; J. [*pusat*], *musat*.

BLOOD, Sg. *maham, bĕhum*; N.S. *lŏt*; C.S. *bĕhip*, (arterial blood) *kĕpar*; B. *mahâm*; J. *mahâm*.

BONE, Sg. [*tuleng*] *jing, jeng, jĕheng*; N.S. *jaâk*; C.S. *jĕâk*; B. *jaâkn*; J. *jaang*.

SKIN, Sg. *kĕtuk*; N.S. *sĕmpok*; C.S. *gĕtö*; B. [*kulit*]; J. [*kulit*].

HAIR, Sg. *sŏk, sŏg*; N.S. *sŏk, sŏg, shuŏg*; C.S. (hair of head) *sŏk*, (whiskers, etc.) *sĕntŏl*; B. *sok*; J. *sa'ŏk*.

II.

NOTES ON CENTRAL SAKAI GRAMMAR.

One of the minor tribulations that a local student of Sakai has to undergo is the well-meant advice of critics in Europe as to what is wanted of him. I have been asked for "A few simple sentences—surely they can present no difficulty"; or, again, for the Lord's Prayer translated for comparative purposes into all the aboriginal tongues; in fact, it has even been suggested to me in perfect seriousness that I should get my Sakai to parse their sentences so as to set all doubts about their grammar at rest. Aborigines do not take kindly to interrogations of this sort. They have a grammar without the trouble of having to learn all about it; and they translate in a very primitive way. If you ask a Sakai to put a Malay sentence into his own language, he either translates your words or your meaning. If he does the former he is too literal; if the latter he is not literal enough. When asked to repeat what he has said so as to enable you to remember it and take it down, he says the same thing in different words. That again is no use. He then says that he is exhausted and can do no more.

It is fatuous to attempt to build up a grammar from a few simple sentences, even if the sentences are obtained. Still more unwise is it to read foreign grammars—such as Mon-Annam prefixes and infixes—into Sakai. If we knew as little about Malay as we do about Sakai the presence of words like *katib, kitab* and *maktub* might lead a hasty student to read the Arabic grammar into the Malay language. It

is quite possible, for instance, that Besisi has borrowed Mon-Annam derivative forms from some Mon-Annam language without adopting the process of word-building by which they are created. The question before us, however, is to find out the ideology and grammar of living Besisi. And if Mr. Skeat's "Besisi Songs" are any criterion, modern Besisi does not use infixes and prefixes, Mon-Annam or otherwise.

Under the circumstances I can only venture to speak as to one dialect, Central Sakai. As to that dialect I speak with some confidence; and though I may be in error as to points of detail, I can assert positively that infixes and prefixes are in regular use, and that a derivative, built up in this way from a root-word, is recognised by the Sakai themselves as being a derivative and not an unconnected word. The relation between a root and its derived forms was brought to my notice in some cases by my Sakai informant himself and the function of the prefix or infix was explained, crudely perhaps, but in a way that showed a knowledge of its real character.

The Central Sakai root-word is usually a monosyllable. The introduction of an infix (that may be written *n*, *'n*, *ĕn* or *ŏn* and is a very short syllable indeed) makes the word substantival—*e.g.*:

> *jis*, daylight; *jĕnis*, a day, twelve hours;
> *pâp*, fire-warmed; *pĕnâp*, the thing toasted or warmed;
> *köh*, striking; *kĕnöh*, club, striker;
> *chok*, prod, stab; *chĕnok*, prodder, spike.

A prefix *pĕr* turns the root into a verb, or a passive root into an active root—*e.g.*:

> *dat*, die; *pĕrdat*, kill;
> *nong*, journey; *pĕrnong*, to go;
> *löt*, extinguished; *pĕrlöt*, to put out (a fire);
> *bet*, sleep; *pĕrbet*, to close the eye.

These two forms can be combined so as to form a verbal noun—*e.g.*:

> *dat*, die; *pĕrdat*, kill; *pĕrĕndat*, murder;
> *löt*, extinguished; *pĕrlöt*, to put out; *pĕrĕnglöt*, an extinguisher;
> *göi*, to be married; *pĕrgöi*, to wed; *pĕrĕnggöi*, marriage.

In all these cases pronunciation demands that the word should be as near a monosyllable as possible—e.g., *prndat*, *prnglöt*, *prnggöi*.

Reflexive, intensive or repeated action is expressed by reduplication. But since pronunciation demands that the double-word should approach a monosyllable in sound the first half is modified and shortened while the second is emphasised and accented—*e.g.*:

> *tök*, to extract; *t'ktök*, torn out, up-rooted;
> *suk*, torch; *s'ksuk*, illuminated (by many torches);
> *chip*, walk; *chichip*, walk about, promenade;
> *pâp*, warm; *pöpâp*, to keep warm, to warm oneself;
> *jar*, run; *jirjar*, to run about.

So much for the principal prefixes and infixes. We now come to the finals.

In certain cases the final letter of a Sakai word changes to *n*, *ng*, or *m*. Sometimes this follows a law of euphony owing to the coincidence of two consonants—*e.g.*:

> *chip*, bird; *chim-klâk*, hawk, eagle;
> *klâk*, hawk; *klâng-blok*, roc, garuda;
> *chĕrök*, long, high; *chĕröng-sôk*, long-haired one, vampire.

But there are cases where the alteration cannot be so explained—*e.g.*:

> *mai*, person; *nu mam*, one person;
> *dök*, house; *nu d'ngnön*, a house;
> *rôk*, dart; *nar r'ngnôn*, two darts.

I could find no rule as to this.

The conjugation of the verb is as follows:

> *göi*, to be married;
> *'nggöi*, (I) am married;
> *ha-göi*, (thou) art married;
> *ki-göi*, (he) is married;
> *bi-göi*, "on se marie";
> *hi-göi*, (we) are married;
> *löi-göi*, (you) are married;
> *uboi göi*, they two are married;
> *ki-göi*, (they) are married;

> *bĕrsôp*, to feed;
> *'mbĕrsôp*, (I) feed;
> *ha-bĕrsôp*, (thou) feedest;
> *ki-bĕrsôp*, (he) feeds;
> *bi-bĕrsôp*, "on mange";

hi-bĕrsôp, (we) feed;
löi bĕrsôp, (you) feed;
uboi bĕrsôp, they both eat together;
ki-bĕrsôp, (they) feed;

neng, to see;
'n-neng, (I) see;
ha-neng, (thou) seest;
ki-neng, (he) sees;
bi-neng, "on voit";
hi-neng, (we) see;
löi neng, (you) see;
uboi neng, they both see;
ki-neng, (they) see.

It should be added that these expressions do not necessarily include the pronoun or subject. If it is desired to emphasise the pronoun or subject the phrase might run: *en 'nggöi*, I am married; *kö ki-neng ha-en*, he is looking at me; *rôi ajöh ki-joi ha-en*, the fly is following me about. But the pronoun may be omitted when no ambiguity arises.

There are also idiomatic uses of some of these forms—e.g., *köh*, to strike; *bi-köh*, people are striking, "on se bat"; *dat bi-köh*, to be killed in an affray. So, too, the first person plural is often used where we should use the indefinite "one," "they," "people."

The past tense is expressed by the word *ya*: *ya 'n-dat*, I died; *ya-ki-dat*, he died But this word is also used idiomatically—e.g., *ki-dat ya-manus*, he was killed by a tiger. So also the future is expressed by *ha*: *ha 'n-dat*, I shall die. But *ha*, like *ya*, is used idiomatically as a preposition—e.g., *ki-neng ha-en*, he is looking at me; *ki-joi ha-en*, he is pursuing me.

The adjective precedes the noun that it qualifies—e.g., *chĕröng-dök*, a lofty house; *dök chĕrök*, the house is lofty. The comparison of adjectives is expressed by the word *ju* (than): *kuchik ĕntoi ju prôk*, the cat is bigger than the mouse. *Ju* also means "from"; cf. Malay *dari*, which is used in the same way for comparisons.

There is no regular article in Central Sakai, but the demonstrative pronouns—*ajöh* (that), *adöh* (this)—may be used if emphasis is desired.

The interrogatives are *bo* (who), *ma* (what), *'mpil* (when)—e.g., *löi bo*, who are you; *ma ki-pĕdeh*, what does he say; *'mpil tibau*, when did you arrive.

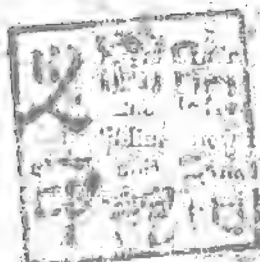
The personal pronouns are *en* (I), *ha* (thou), *löi* (you, politer than *ha*), *kö* (he, she, it). The possessives are *en* (my), *he* (your, thy), *i* (his, hers, its). This last is very common and idiomatic—e.g., *ma i-'ngrok*, what does he say—*i.e.*, what are his words. The possessive precedes the noun to which it refers—e.g., *en-mĕnö ya-dat*, my father is dead.

Adverbs are very common. The principal are:

madeh, here;	*kintöh*, over there;
ditöh, there;	*kindeh*, on this side;
ditah, up stream;	*kinjöh*, thence.
direh, down stream;	

Some of these suggest a verbal connection that is not to be explained by the present method of word-building.

The most important prepositions are *ju* (from) and *nu* (to).



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